United Nations A/60/PV.17

General Assembly

Sixtieth session

Official Records

17th plenary meeting
Tuesday, 20 September 2005, 6.50 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Eliasson ..... (Sweden)

The meeting was called to order at 6.50 p.m.

Item 7 of the provisional agenda (*continued*)

Organization of work, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items

Report of the General Committee (A/60/250 and Corr.1)

The President: May I invite the General Assembly to direct its attention to section I of the report of the Committee. In that section, the General Committee took note of the information contained in paragraphs 2 and 3.

May I request the General Assembly to now direct its attention to section II, entitled "Organization of the session", which contains a number of recommendations concerning the General Committee, rationalization of work, opening and closing dates for the session, schedule of meetings, the general debate, conduct of the meetings, and so on. All of those recommendations concern established practice, so rather than going through them one by one, I believe it would be better and more efficient that we address all of these organizational matters concerning the General Assembly as a whole.

As there are no comments on that approach, we shall proceed accordingly.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of all of the information that it is requested to take note of and to approve all the recommendations that the General Committee has made in section II of the report?

It was so decided.

The President: Having just adopted the recommendation in paragraph 16 of section II, I should like to remind members that, during the final week of Ramadan, from 31 October to 4 November 2005, when local time will be Eastern Standard Time, the hours of the plenary meetings and the meetings of the Main Committees will be from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at the latest.

Having also just adopted the recommendation in paragraph 20 on waiving the requirements of rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly to declare a meeting open, I should like to endorse the practical suggestion that has been made at previous sessions: that each delegation designate someone to be present in the meeting rooms at the scheduled time.

Next, I invite the Assembly to turn its attention to section III of the memorandum, entitled "Observations on the organization of the work of the General Assembly".

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of the information contained in that section, concerning the timely submission of draft proposals for the review of their programme budget implications?

It was so decided.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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The President: May I now invite members to turn their attention to section IV dealing with the adoption of the agenda. The question of allocation of items will be dealt with subsequently in section V.

In section IV, the General Committee took note of the information contained in paragraphs 48 to 53.

In paragraph 54, the General Assembly is informed that the General Committee decided to postpone to a later date its consideration of the inclusion of item 18 of the draft agenda, "Question of the Comorian island of Mayotte".

In paragraph 55, the General Committee recommends that the consideration of item 39 of the draft agenda, "Question of the Malagasy islands of Glorieuses, Juan de Nova, Europa and Bassas da India", be deferred to the sixty-first session and that the item be included in the provisional agenda of that session.

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: With respect to paragraph 56, the General Committee decided not to recommend the inclusion of item 42 of the draft agenda.

In paragraph 57, in connection with item 74 of the draft agenda, "Holocaust remembrance", the General Committee recommends that item 74 be included in the agenda of the current session under heading D, "Promotion of human rights".

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 58, in connection with item 156 of the draft agenda, "Observer status for the Latin American Integration Association in the General Assembly", the General Committee recommends its inclusion in the agenda of the current session under heading I, "Organization, administrative and other matters".

May I take it that the Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: In paragraph 59, in connection with item 157 of the draft agenda, "Observer status for the Common Fund for Commodities in the Gen Assembly", the General Committee recommends inclusion in the agenda of the current session un heading I.

May I take it that the Assembly approves recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: With respect to paragraph 60, General Committee decided not to recommend inclusion of item 158 of the draft agenda.

With regard to the proposal made by the Vi Chairperson of the Third Committee concerning consideration of the matters raised in the letter da 26 November 2004 from the Chairman of the Th Committee to the President of the General Assembly the fifty-ninth session, the General Committee deci to postpone to a later date consideration of the iss raised in that letter.

We turn now to the agenda which the Gene Committee recommends in paragraph 61 of its rep for adoption by the General Assembly, taking i account the decisions just adopted on items 18, 39, 74, 156 to 158 of the draft agenda, and concerning letter of the Third Committee.

Bearing in mind that the agenda is now organi under nine headings, we shall consider the inclusion items under each heading as a whole. I should like remind members once again that, at present, we are discussing the substance of any item.

I give the floor to the representative of Solom Islands.

Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands): My delegati wishes to refer to document A/60/250 and to regis its disappointment in the manner in which the Gene Committee discussed the issue of the agenda. Solom Islands, among other countries, was actually denied t opportunity to debate the inclusion of certain items the agenda, and feels that the United Nations must least have a mechanism in place to provide for the f and equal participation of all Member States.

Rulings by the Chair to limit speakers provisional agenda item 56 in the current worki paper and item 60 denied the right of Member States speak on the issue. In that regard, Solomon Islan feels that the principles of democracy and universali were not respected. Those principles should not

challenged, but rather protected and upheld. At times, my delegation feels, the Secretariat tends to dictate and impose on States, putting on paper rules that restrict countries from presenting their views, indirectly marginalizing them from the process that they should be part of.

My delegation feels that, so long as we take such an approach, this Assembly will pick and choose which threats to discuss and which to sweep under the carpet. Solomon Islands hopes that the approach taken by the General Committee this year in discussing the two items must not and should not set a precedent for future General Committee working methods.

I wish to close by assuring you, Sir, of Solomon Islands' continued support during your term in office.

The President: The statement of the representative of Solomon Islands is duly noted.

Referring to that very special situation, I want to make the point that, in view of the summit meeting, which was imminent at the time, the limitation of speakers was very much due to the enormous time pressures under which we were then working, with delegations on their way out to the airport and the very special conditions that existed before the summit. The limitation was the recommendation of the General Committee members, whom I am there to serve and chair.

I thank the representative of Solomon Islands for the continued confidence that he expressed.

Items 1 to 3 and 8 have already been dealt with.

We turn to items 4 to 7. May I take it that those items are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Gambia.

Mr. Fal (Gambia): I want to make an intervention on the statement you just made, Sir, concerning the reason why item 42 of the provisional agenda was not included in the agenda of the sixtieth session. In that connection, I want to clarify the fact that the time constraint due to the High-level Plenary Meeting was the sole reason that debate on the two Taiwan-related issues was cut short. The limitations on the number of speakers, as well as on the time allocated to each statement as adopted by the General Committee on 13 September, should in no way set a precedent for future debates on those issues. The right of every State Member of the United Nations to raise issues of concern to the international community should therefore be recognized and reaffirmed.

I want to call members' attention to the fact that the General Committee had actually decided to shorten the debate on the two proposals listed under items 42 and 158 in the provisional agenda regarding the situation in the Taiwan Strait.

The President: The statement of the representative of Gambia is duly noted.

We turn now to the inclusion of the items listed under heading A, "Maintenance of international peace and security".

May I take it that the items listed under heading A are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

We come now to heading B, "Promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and recent United Nations conferences".

May I take it that the items listed under that heading are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to heading C, "Development of Africa".

May I take it that the item listed under that heading is included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Now we come to heading D, "Promotion of human rights".

May I take it that the items listed under heading D are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Heading E is entitled "Effective coordination of humanitarian assistance efforts".

May I take it that the items listed under that heading are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we turn to heading F, "Promotion of justice and international law".

May I take it that the items listed under heading F are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Now we turn to heading G, "Disarmament".

May I take it that the items listed under that heading are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Heading H is entitled "Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations".

May I take it that the items listed under that heading are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: Lastly, we turn to heading I, "Organizational, administrative and other matters".

May I take it that the items listed under heading I are included in the agenda?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to section V of the report of the General Committee on allocation of items.

The General Committee took note of the information contained in paragraphs 62 to 64.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to also take note of the information contained in paragraph 64 concerning the granting of observer status?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to the recommendations contained in paragraphs 66 to 70. We shall take up the recommendations one by one.

Before we proceed, may I remind members that the item numbers cited here refer to the agenda in paragraph 61 of the report before us in document A/60/250.

We turn first to paragraphs 66 (a) to (l) relating to plenary meetings.

I give the floor to the representative of the United States of America.

Mr. O'Brien (United States of America): The United States will not participate in the adoption of this section of the report of the General Committee. We note that paragraph 66 (j) does not follow past practice in accurately reflecting what transpired in the Committee, and are pleased that a corrigendum has been issued.

The United States will not support the adoption of this section because we do not agree with the allocation of the item on the International Criminal Court (ICC) directly to the plenary. If the General Assembly is to consider that technical legal item, it should do so in the Legal Committee, as it has for the past 15 years. To move the item to the plenary would be to ignore efforts to reform and rationalize the work of the General Assembly. That is the basis for our objection to the proposed allocation.

The International Court of Justice, established by the Charter as the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, reports directly to the plenary, as do the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, established by the Security Council as subsidiary bodies of that principal organ. Unlike those judicial Tribunals, the International Criminal Court — a treaty body to which many United Nations Members do not belong — is neither a United Nations organ nor a subsidiary body. It is not appropriate for the ICC item to be sent directly to the plenary, and the United States will not support that recommendation by the General Committee.

The President: I take note of the statement of the representative of the United States.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of all of the information that the General Committee wishes it to take note of and approve all of the recommendations of the General Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We now turn to paragraph 67, relating to item 97, "General and complete disarmament".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraphs 68 relating to item 64, "Advancement of women".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraph 69 relating to item 125, "Programme planning".

May I take it that the General Assembly approves that recommendation?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to paragraphs 70 (a) and (b).

May I take it that the General Assembly approves the recommendations relating to items 155 and 156, "Observer status for the Latin American Integration Association in the General Assembly" and "Observer status for the Common Fund for Commodities in the General Assembly"?

It was so decided.

The President: We shall now turn to paragraph 71 of the report of the General Committee.

I invite members to turn to the list of items recommended by the General Committee for consideration directly in plenary meeting under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items listed in paragraph 71?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the First Committee under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the First Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee) under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)?

It was so decided.

The President: We come now to the list of items which the General Committee has recommended for allocation to the Second Committee under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I consider that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Second Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: We turn now to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Third Committee under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Third Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: Next, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for allocation to the Fifth Committee under all the relevant headings.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed for the Fifth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: Lastly, we come to the list of items which the General Committee recommends for the Sixth Committee.

Taking into account the decisions just adopted, may I take it that the General Assembly approves the allocation of items proposed to the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of the first report of the General Committee. I wish to thank all the members of the Assembly for their cooperation.

Each Main Committee will receive the list of agenda items allocated to it so that it may begin its work in accordance with rule 99 of the rules of procedure.

I give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica.

Mr. Díaz Paniagua (Costa Rica) (*spoke in Spanish*): Having made our decisions, I wish to note that my delegation feels that, in the context of the revitalization of the General Assembly, the agenda items on the law of the sea and criminal justice should have been allocated to the Sixth Committee. As members are aware, my delegation could not make its view prevail in the General Committee. We hope that our proposal will be taken into account in the allocation of items next year.

The President: The statement of the representative of Costa Rica is duly noted.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.